BENGALURU, MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2022 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 34 | Min 21 | Humidity 38% Clear with periodic clouds Sensex 59,276 | Nifty 17,670 | Gold 51,380 | Silver 67,050 | Dollar 75.94 | Euro 83.85 | GBP 99.40

No steel reinforcement used, especially 'tie bars', anywhere in concrete slabs, including joints, allege Malleswaram residents as BBMP says 75% of Sampige Road white-topping done

WHITE-TOPPING, 'A REAL STEAL'

Tie bars or 'connectors' used to hold concrete slabs together

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is white-topping Sampige Road in Malleswaram.

According to BBMP officials, 75% of the stretch has been covered. However, residents there are now crying foul over the 'sub-standard work'.

They alleged the stretch is being white-topped without including the essential tie bars. Residents also pointed out, on the contrary, the said tie bars are visible in white-topping work underway in Koramangala and Indiranagar.

"There is no steel reinforcement anywhere in the concrete slabs, including the joints. Normally, steel bars are provided at the joints so that the slabs behave as a single unit. White-topping work in Indiranagar and Koramangala have these bars sticking out of concrete slabs.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

Close up of a white-topped section in Koramangala. (Inset) White-topping underway in Malleswaram

"Tie bars are put while concreting to ensure grip and increase structural strength. It is no showpiece to be drilled in later

— Dr Ashish Verma, IISc

Mushroom Magic

Non-profit, horticulture dept equip women with mushroom farming skills to earn a living

| Melvin Mathew
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Post-covid-19 job losses, women of the informal sector are farming mushrooms. Growing mushrooms is less labour-intensive and lucrative, though it requires some training and expertise. However, Ready-To-Fruit (RTF) bags produced by the Biotechnology Centre of the Horticulture Department, Hulimavu, are a great help.

Non-profit ActionAid has set up a 20x20 dedicated space for mushroom farming near the Satellite bus station and is training women. RTF bags are procured by ActionAid at Rs 20 per bag and given to the women. The NGO has helped the women with 600 bags, disinfectants, a structure to hang the bags, gloves, sanitiser, disposable chef caps, besides marketing.

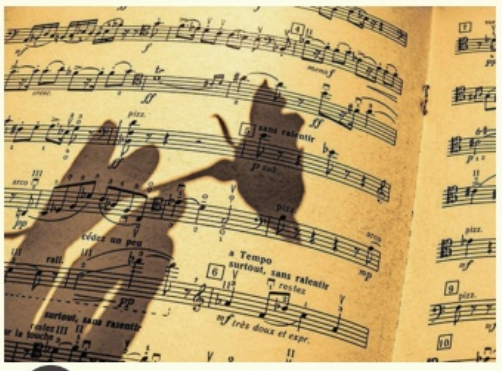
Field coordinator Manjula explained the process begins way before procuring the RTF bags. "The room where the bags are hung, must be thoroughly sanitised. Each bag is hung 1-2 feet apart. One-inch slits are made on the bags. The bags are then sprayed with water. On hotter days, water is sprayed every hour. Daily at 6:00 am,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Art in the air

Inspired by Sri Lankan architecture and Geoffrey Bawa's design philosophy, MAYA, India's first slow living restaurant and art gallery is presenting "Susegad" a collection of Abstract Paintings by Darpan Kaur, curated by Samira Sheth. **When: April 1-30; 12-11 pm**
Where: MAYA, Jayanagar
Ticket: +91 7483871410 / +91 9731755535



02 Musical tribute

Houseful Entertainment and Ubercorp Properties brings the young sensation Saurav Kishan to perform at the "Relive Rafi" concert for the first time in Bengaluru, in honour of the iconic Md Rafi. Watch a very special launch of the company anthem with a live performance of an array of popular singers.
When: April 9; 6 pm;
Where: Chowdiah Memorial Hall
Ticket: Bookmyshow

03 Furballs' day out

SteppinOut by Dineout, in association with Heads Up For Tails is once again back to present the most exciting event for every pet and pet parent in the city - PettinOut. Drop by for a day full of fun and games with super fun activities like a pet pool, ball pit, movie night, pet grooming, yummy treats & much more!
When: April 17; 11 am; Where: JW Marriott Hotel

City's favourite musical saga resumes offline

To commemorate 72nd I-Day, Ramanavami music fest features 72 musicians

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The 84th Sree Ramanavami Global Music Festival is back in offline mode. After holding online concerts for the past two years owing to the pandemic, the onstage concert is now being held at Fort High School Grounds in Chamrajpet. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai inaugurated the music festival on Sunday.

The concert will be graced by prominent names such as Ranjini and Gayathri (Carnatic vocalist sisters), P Unnikrishnan (Indian Carnatic vocalist), playback singers and others. To commemorate the platinum jubilee of Independence Day, 72 musicians will be performing at the concert. The concert is run by Sree Ramaseva Mandali, which was established in the year 1939 by S V Narayanrao Swamy, who at the age of 14 started organising Ram Navami celebrations on the footpaths of Chamrajpet after drawing inspiration from Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Since then, the music lovers of the city never miss a chance to listen to the soulful voices of the artists.

Abhijith Varadaraj S, executive officer, Sree Ramaseva Mandali, said, "Initially, we started with a thatched roof however, as slowly the event started growing and with technological advancement, we have now shifted to waterproof roofs." There was always a crowd of people who would wait eagerly for the concert to start and the numbers have remained consistent.

The concert will be graced by prominent musicians like Indian classical vocalist P Unnikrishnan, Ranjini and Gayathri (Carnatic vocalist sisters) and others

As more and more people started joining the concert, the word spread, and gradually famous personalities were also a part of it. Soon, the musicians also would wait for the concert so that they could showcase their performances.

The concert has earlier brought on stage famous personalities like Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan, Ustad Bismillah Khan, Dr M. Balamuralikrishna, Bhimsen Joshi and Pandit Ravishankar among others

> **"Music lovers eagerly took part even when the event was online. This year, I'm sure that the seats will fill up** – Abhijith Varadaraj S, Sree Ramaseva Mandali

Varadaraj said that this time they were expecting a huge crowd. "During the pandemic, we were holding online concerts and music lovers were extremely eager to be a part of the event, even when they couldn't experience an onstage show. Now that we are conducting the offline show again, I am sure the seats will fill up," he added. Reminiscing about the online shows, he said that conducting online concerts is quite a smooth process.

Eminent musicians like the Mysore Brothers – Indian classical violinist duo Dr Mysore Manjunath and Mysore Nagaraj – performed from their homes. "In 2021, we held 10 concerts at the pandal itself with proper restrictions in place. However, after that we had to shift to online mode as the lockdown had started. However, we had a good viewership of almost 25 lakh people," he said.

Woman gets new life after timely heart transplant

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A 37-year-old woman suffering from a chronic heart disease got a new lease of life after a successful transplantation recently. Doctors say that heart transplantation is sometimes the only way to save a patient suffering from an advanced form of heart disease. For the 37-year-old young patient from Bengaluru, she found a matching donor on time. The patient was suffering from dilated cardiomyopathy, a progressive condition where the heart muscles do not function properly, leading to circulation failure.

Dr Karthik Vasudevan (Senior Consultant-Interventional Cardiology Heart Failure Specialist, Manipal Hospital, Yeshwanthpur) said that India is the leading country in South Asia for carrying out the maximum number of heart transplants, with an average transplantation rate of 0.2 per million per population.

This was a lot lower than other countries like the US, which was 7.8 per million. So, who needs a heart transplant? Dr Vasudevan said, "The indications for a person to undergo heart transplant are cardiomyopathy with advanced heart failure, class IV angina with no revascularizable options, severe decompensate inoperable valvular heart disease, inoperable congenital heart disease and Transthyretin-related amyloidosis involving the heart. The 37-year-old underwent heart transplant after being diagnosed with end-stage Dilated Cardiomyopathy (advanced heart failure) as the patient was no longer responding to oral medications and needed continuous infusion of medications (inotropes) to keep her alive."

> **"India is leading in South Asia for carrying out the maximum number of heart transplants** – Dr Karthik Vasudevan, Manipal Hospital, Yeshwanthpur

He said that the length of time a patient can depend on medication depends on various factors.

There has been a substantial advancement in the management of heart failure with the availability of newer medications. A recent study showed that the combination of medication can increase the chance of survival by six years across all age groups.

Out of all chronic heart failure patients, around five to seven per cent of them go on to have advanced heart failure. "This subgroup of patients will need a heart transplant if eligible or an artificial heart if not eligible for heart transplant. The 37-year old patient was well on oral medication from 2012 until July 2021. Later, her condition started deteriorating and was hospitalised frequently and could not be stabilised with the existing medical treatment and had to undergo heart transplantation," Dr Vasudevan said. Organ donation awareness is still uncommon in India. "In case of a heart transplant, we need only a brain dead patient whose family has volunteered to donate their kin's heart," he said.

The value of organ donation is known or exposed to people only when their family undergoes organ transplantation. Donating organs is saving lives. Awareness among the general public should increase and more people should come forward for organ donation so that people with Advanced Heart Failure get their "Gift of Life". Dr Mohammed Rehan Sayeed (Consultant- Cardio-Thoracic and Vascular Surgery, Manipal Hospital, Yeshwanthpur) added that the 37-year-old patient was sent home safely after three to four weeks from the surgery.

Vaccination is no child's play in BBMP limits

With 11.5% coverage, BBMP has a lot of ground to cover to achieve Corbevax targets

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The Corbevax vaccine that was rolled out in mid-March for the vaccination of kids between 12 and 14 years of age in the state, has seen the worst coverage in the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) limits as compared to all other districts of the state. Under BBMP limits, so far only 11.5% have received the vaccination.

The total targeted population in the age group for vaccination is 20,24,999. So far in the state only 9,95,117 have been vaccinated, with an overall coverage of 49.1% as on April 3.

For Corbevax, the health and family welfare department had instructed that those children born on or before March 15, are eligible for vaccination. The turnout for vaccination in this age group has been quite low.

BBMP limits has the highest targeted population with 2,81,541 targeted children for Corbevax. However, only 32,270 beneficiaries have been vaccinated with the first dose, which is just 11.5% total coverage, since its roll out.

Over all, 15 districts have shown satisfactory coverage with a total coverage of 50% and above. Hassan has topped the charts amongst the districts with 79.7% population vaccination in this age group. Udupi is at the second spot with 76.6%, followed by Bengaluru Rural at 74%. And Kolar has reported 70.5% coverage.

Over seven districts have a coverage between 50 and 59% -- Kodagu with 59.5%, Dharwad at 57.7% , Belagavi at 55.1% and Chikkaballpura at 52%.

Nine districts reported less than 50% coverage. While BBMP performed the worst, even Bengaluru Urban has not done well, with the second worst coverage. The targeted population for this age group is 38,186, but only 13,333 have been vaccinated which is 33.9% coverage. Vijayapura reported 35% coverage, while Kalaburagi has 37%, Mysuru reported 40.3% and Bidar has 44.8% of Corbevax coverage.

The BBMP health officials pointed out that the number of vaccinations has been low in the limits due to the ongoing examinations at many schools. "Parents do not want to get their children vaccinated during the exams, as they are hesitant if the children could have any side effects. Even children do not want to miss out on their exams. Hence there is a delay of getting inoculated in this age group. While some of them are not preferring to get the children vaccinated in health centres and are waiting for schools to set up a vaccination drive. Some have already started vaccination, while a few are still yet to start," said a health official from South Zone.

A teacher from a private school said that the parents still seemed to be hesitant. "We are asking the parents to get the children vaccinated for their safety, but some are still sceptical about it. To get the children vaccinated is completely on them. However, we are educating them about vaccination," she said.

Kids queue up to receive Corbevax vaccination at a government hospital

49 of Sunday's 50 cases in B'luru

Karnataka reported one of its lowest Covid tally since June last year with 50 people testing positive for the infection on Sunday. Of the 50, 49 were reported from Bengaluru (with only one case from Belagavi) with the remaining districts reporting zero covid cases. For the third day in a row, zero Covid deaths were reported in the State. Currently, there are 1,515 active cases in the State with 1,399 from Bengaluru.

So far so good, the rest will have to wait

Ongoing projects have not only hit the day-to-day activities of people, it seems it is also hindering BBMP's own initiatives. A recently-launched clean-up drive at the Intermediate Ring Road, Koramangala, might get stalled by a few months, due to white-topping work in the area.

The drive in association with The Ugly Indian(TUI) between Ejipura Signal and Domlur over the past few days has managed to salvage the path to the Ejipura Signal bus stop. The volunteer group carried out a 6-km inspection run on Sunday on the stretch to ascertain the problem areas. When BM visited the site, on the left side, the area extending till the Ejpura signal bus stand had been cleared and the adjoining wall was painted. On the other side, the footpath has been reclaimed.

But the clean-up drive cannot be completed as part of the road is occupied by the white-topping work which is likely to be done by the end of September. Due to this work, only about 3.8 km is available for the clean-up. Chief Engineer(Project) Lokesh told Mirror," White-topping is almost over and may be done by May-end." A member from TUI said they are focusing on completing the work as much as possible. "Around 800 metres is available for cleaning on the left side of the road and the rest of the stretch is occupied by the work," said a member of TUI. BBMP Chief Marshall Col Rajbir Singh said the clean-up has been completed in the best way possible.

—Melvin Mathew

Volunteers take a breakfast break at the footpath

FAKE NEWS BUSTER MIRROR

BRUCE WILLIS DID NOT GET APHASIA DUE TO COVID JAB

THE CLAIM

As soon as the news broke that film actor Bruce Willis is suffering from aphasia, many social media users spread a claim that the actor had got the disease from the covid vaccine. All kind of claims were made that this was an after-effect of covid vaccine.

SO, WHAT'S THE TRUTH?

The actor's family had issued a statement about his condition, but they don't bring up the vaccine, which means the claims are made up as there is neither a source or any evidence to back it up. Aphasia is a disorder affecting people way before covid vaccines were created. It is a damage to the brain and covid vaccines do not cause any reactions or damage to the brain.

BUST FAKE NEWS WITH MIRROR

9591233247

Let's separate the news from the noise, Bengaluru. Tell us about that incredible-sounding story/news/alert that you've received on WhatsApp or social media and Bangalore Mirror researchers and editors will see if it checks out. If it doesn't, we'll call it out

TOPCOMMENTS

It is time to start focussing on city's infra woes

Bangalore Mirror's story 'Telangana Minister takes a dig at Bengaluru infrastructure' has evicted a few responses on the BM website. Prabhu writes, Modi is on a mission to convert Karnataka in to Bihar. BJP high command also always treats south Indians as slaves. Karnataka's per capita income was highest among all south Indian states before BJP come to power in the state. Modi used this state only for looting purpose, denied any central funds to the state which pays the highest tax to the Centre after Maharastra. Vasudeva Murthy R writes, Yes pathetic conditions of city's roads and other infra. We love and respect Modi, but instead of banking on him to bail you out every time, work hard to execute his development manthra sincerely - only this can save you & BJP in Karnataka and the south.

'K'taka competing globally, not with other states'

With Telangana openly wooing the city's companies, Minister of IT/BT and Science and Technology Dr CN Aswath Narayan said Karnataka believed in competing 'globally' and not with neighbouring states. "We are all Indians first. We are not intolerant of the progress of our neighbouring states. In India, every state has its own uniqueness. We firmly believe in the entire India growing as one country," he said. He said Bengaluru is currently known world over as a city of startups, innovation, science and technology. "The city has not earned this fame overnight. It has its own legacy which dates back to the regime of Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar who set the foundation for establishing IISc in the city. I do not say the system is foolproof. Yes there may be loopholes. But, the governments at the Centre and state are making all efforts to make the system more accountable than ever," Narayan said. BMB

Not out of the woods yet

Number of objections raised by Bengalureans in response to notices put out by agencies to cut trees for infra has been abysmal. BM digs deep to know why

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Citizens have been given a 10-day period to file objections; today is the last date

Today's the last date to file objections, comments and suggestions in response to the public notice issued by BBMP regarding the removal of 14 trees on CV Raman Road. So far, the Palike received only one objection until Friday. Citizens were given a 10-day period for this.

Whether it is the proposed cutting of thousands of trees to make way for a Metro project or felling of a tree for road infrastructure, the number of objections raised by the Bengaloreans in response to such notices has been abysmal in the past.

For instance, when BMRCL issued a public notice a few months ago for the removal of ten trees standing in the construction zone of Vellara Junction Metro Station, not a single objection was raised against the proposal. In another case, BMRCL suggested the removal of 343 trees between Jayanagar Fire Station and Nagawara and only one objection was raised. "The practice to notify the public via newspapers is a recent development owing to a High Court judgment. Many agencies are issuing these notices but very few are submitting objections or suggestions. A part of it can be attributed to the pandemic, but this is also caused due to an overall apathy," said Dattatraya Devare, trustee, Bangalore Environment Trust. "The deputy conservator of forest is supposed to furnish details on action taken against every objection raised by the public in response to the notice and they are referred to the Tree Expert Committee (TEC). TEC examines every tree and then passes the order on retention, translocation or felling down of the trees," explained Devare.

Bangalore Mirror
How many trees on the line?
Over 100 trees on CV Raman Road marked in red, though Palike had said only 14 will face axe. Plus details on these trees are nowhere to be found

On March 30, BM reported that 100, not 14, trees on CV Raman Road are marked in red

Enhancing public participation

Experts said ten days is too short a period for citizens to respond to such notices. They said raising objections requires careful observation and knowledge of ecology and tree behavior.

"They must inform people well in advance and give at least two months for the public to survey the trees, get an expert's opinion and then raise objections. The agencies first call for the tenders, finalise the project, and then issue notices," said Dr AN Yellappa Reddy, an environmentalist. According to Harini Nagendra, head of Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability at Ajim Premji University, the low levels of public participation can be attributed to various reasons. "These agencies often divide the number of trees in a large project into smaller groups of less than 50 trees. This does not give the real picture of the total impact leading to a weak reaction from the citizens. Moreover, the time given to file objections is often quite limited," said Nagendra.

The authorities must call for meetings in advance of the project to invite public input and take them into the planning process to maximise public participation.

"They invite objections only at the end, where the only option for people is to vote for trees or public infrastructure. The city needs both and there are better ways... But for this, people's inputs need to be taken into consideration in advance, while designing the project," said Nagendra. Many pointed at the conspicuous way in which these notices at placed in the newspapers; they are bound to get overlooked.

"I have hardly come across any such notices... Besides, just publishing them in the newspaper in today's time and age is not enough. The government should consider posting them on social media to get quick and widespread visibility. It should be made mandatory," said Dr Ashish Verma of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

Lack of transparency and accessibility are other reasons behind the lukewarm response from citizens.

"The notices must also be shared with ward committees and displayed prominently in public locations such as parks, lakes and BBMP offices where the tree felling will take place. There must be a way for people to see all the objections received. Otherwise, how does the public know how many objections have been provided and recorded?" asked Nagendra.

And finally, there is some tender movement on PRR

PRR, once constructed, will help reduce the pressure on ORR, it is said

After two decades, Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has finally invited tenders for the much needed Peripheral Ring Road (PRR). The project will be taken up under the public-private partnership model.

The project will include the construction of an eight-lane PRR with service roads, 100-metre-wide roads, clover leaf junctions, flyovers, underpasses, overpasses, over bridges, under bridges, toll plazas, transport zones, culverts, minor and major bridges and utility ducts.

As per the tender document, the concessionaire will get a lease of 50 years to operate the road on a revenue-sharing basis along with funding and land acquisition of 2,560 acres. The last date for submitting tenders is April 18.

The tenders will be opened and evaluated on April 20. The project got a green signal from the state cabinet recently. However, sources said, despite calling for tenders, the groundwork may take time. Sources said, if all the required clearances are given, it may take six months to a year to start the work.

So far, owners of 1,810 out of the 2,560 acres planned for land acquisition have been notified. The land has been identified and a proposal has been sent to the government. The approval is pending.

Once developed, PRR will have toll plazas, relaxing rooms, helipads for air ambulances and charging stations for electric vehicles. This road will not have any signals. In different junctions, underpasses and flyovers will be built. This will definitely ease the congestion in the city.

According to BDA's project report, "With the immense growth in intra-city traffic, ORR is under tremendous pressure already... In order to relieve the traffic pressure on ORR and major road networks of the city, a PRR of 116 kms was planned outside of the ORR. This stretch will not only improve connectivity of areas beyond ORR, but will also ease the congestion on ORR." – Prakash VL

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Yellow spot

D'Souza Road

While the public is responsible for this patch on D'Souza Road turning into a yellow spot, BBMP must also be held accountable.

Fix the leak

Linden Street

Sewage water has been leaking onto the road here. Despite complaints, the authorities concerned have not taken any measures to rectify this.

Wasted

JC Road

This is the condition of the 1st Cross in Journalist Colony. Will the Palike take action against this?

‘Every day is a risk, but I am happy to help’

36-yr-old Bengalurean has reached Ukraine to help people in the time of war

Khalid with Ukrainian kids after providing relief material

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

As Ukraine suffers under the blow of a war, help has poured in from various quarters -- one such helping hand has reached out from Bengaluru. Thirty-six-year-old Fahad Khalid, a resident of Marathahalli, reached Ukraine and has been involved in aid activity right from the start of the war.

The techie, who works in Hong Kong, had to return to his family in the city when covid struck. Instead of sitting around, he plunged in with helping the covid-hit during the first and second waves.

He had resumed work in Hong Kong after the third wave, but pained by the situation in Ukraine, Khalid decided to volunteer there.

He told BM he was following news of the war closely and the organisations that were helping out. “I tracked an organisation on social media, who were willing to take volunteers from any place with a verification process. I applied to volunteer to provide medical supplies and kit and help in treatment. It took over 10 days for them for verification and then they said I could come over,” he said.

He had two challenges: Convince his family and apply for a visa. Khalid’s wife, a paediatrician working in Bengaluru, was supportive. “She was supportive and convinced my family too. It was emotional as anything can happen in a war country. But my wife said, I should go and come back safe. Then I managed to get the visa too,” he said.

At the Poland-Ukraine border, he met a paramedic group. They were receiving calls from everywhere for medical relief. The organisations were getting supplies from Britain, Netherlands, such as bandages, insulin, needle syringes, gloves, medicine and so on. Khalid and the team members would take the kits to places where required.

Khalid, who is also a trained paramedic, could help in treatment too, even in Lviv where he saw people who had been shot at and severely injured. “For me to see people with such grievous injuries was upsetting. Sometimes my hands would shake while providing first aid. But I had to be strong. After providing basic treatment, we would shift them to hospitals,” Khalid said.

Khalid has another week till his Visa expires. He says, the situation is better now, but danger still exists

Though the stories were grim, he had to keep going for the sake of the injured. He remembered the story of a young sniper who had been shot on his legs and his right eye was destroyed. “He came to help the people, but he got injured instead,” he said. And when he saw a three-year-old numb with shock after losing her parents, Khalid was heartbroken.

Khalid has another week till his Visa expires. He says though the situation is better now, there is still danger. “We are stopped by the armed forces when we move out. Every day is a risk here, but I’m happy that I could come over and make an impact,” he said.

Saqib Idrees, his cousin, sums up the pride his family feels in him. “Khalid always helps people in times of crisis. He never says no. During covid we have volunteered together and he helped many people. Going to Ukraine, he has made us so proud,” Saqib said.

Cops can’t turn phone-snatchers

Responding to complaints from netizens, city police commissioner Kamal Pant took to Twitter to state, he doesn’t approve of cops seizing mobile phones of anyone under any pretext.

“We strongly disapprove of any such act. If you come across such an incident, immediately share the details of location/time of the incident, Hoysala number (three digits - written on the sides) and vehicle number. Strict action shall be taken against such officers,” Pant wrote on Twitter.

A netizen said, “The same thing happened to me in Indiranagar. The cops opened my bag and took my cell phone and checked my gallery. Even though I was not wrong, cops charged me for a petty case and took Rs 500 without giving a receipt.”

Another said this is not a new issue.

“This happened to my friend a few months ago at Central Silk Board junction. Cops snatched my friend’s phone and checked WhatsApp.”

Another shared, this has happened with them thrice. They said, cops intimidated them by talking loudly.

“They didn’t stop at checking my phone but also checked my pockets. Why is the police seeing us as goons or criminals?”

What about towing?

After a PSI kicked a differently-abled woman, more than 110 towing vehicles in the city paused work. Hundreds engaged in towing changed jobs too. Now, towing has completely stopped.

The chief minister guaranteed a people-friendly towing system for Karnataka. The home minister also conducted a meeting with the inspector general of police and other officials. Yet, two months since the incident, there has been no progress in this regard. Officials said the government has not taken a decision on resuming towing in the city. —Prakash VL

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Mushrooming livelihoods

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

mushrooms are harvested," she said.

Last year they got around 10-15 kg in monsoon. During summer, yield dipped to 2 kg. "To sell the produce, we set up stalls in public," she said.

Manjula oversees water spraying, room's humidity and temperature, hygiene, harvest and sales.

Depending on quality, women collectively earn Rs 18,000-20,000 per month. "We can harvest 40-50 kg of mushrooms. We have introduced mushrooms into our diet considering the nutritional value," said Anjali, a grower.

Lalitha Srinivasan, senior programme officer at ActionAid, said the space accommodates around 300 bags on hanging ropes. "From 300 bags, 100-125 kg of mushroom may be harvested in 25-30 days. The quantity of fruiting depends on a conducive environment," she said.

Dr Varun Amingad, assistant director of horticulture, mushroom laboratory, Biocentre, told BM: "Mushroom spawn production is an expensive process and needs specific lab equipment. To address space and labour concerns, we provide RTF bags for beginners, prepared in our lab for 20-25 days and containing paddy straw colonised by fungal mycelium," he said.

Growers must wait for mushrooms to pop out of bags. "RTF bags are given at Rs 20 per bag containing 1 kg paddy straw. We also provide one-day theoretical training, one-week hands-on training and certification. Training is also aimed to break the misconceptions spread on social media," he said.

He said though button mushrooms are the most common, they

want to spread awareness on white, pink and yellow oyster mushrooms high in nutrition.

"The RTF concept was initiated by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Indian Institute of Horticulture Research in 2014. Around 1,700 horticulture officers in Karnataka were trained including Biocentre staff. The purpose was to increase the consumption of mushrooms and increase household nutrition," said Dr Chandrashekara C, senior scientist at IIHR. He said the mushrooms can also be dried at 4 degrees Celsius and used for up to one year.

The project was in pilot mode in KR Puram in September 2021 but was later started near the Satellite bus stand in November.

"Currently, 10 women are involved. We gave them exposure at IIHR and trained them," added Srinivasan.

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Safety call on EV sales

Sales growth may slow down as safety norms were tightened following vehicle mishaps

The surging sales growth of electric vehicles (EVs), especially in the two and three-wheeler categories that have seen several launches lately, may slow as safety norms are tightened following four recent fires involving such bikes. Government-appointed testing agencies are understood to be tweaking parameters for such vehicles, especially to avoid the lithium ion batteries overheating and going up in flames. The government has already prescribed the toughest benchmark for EVs. "India has the world's stringent testing standard, AIS 156, which includes the fire resistance test where the battery is subject to a direct and indirect flame for over two minutes," said Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant. "Manufacturers voluntarily ensure that all of their batteries are certified as per this standard."

AIS 156 may be more suited for European climatic conditions rather than the high temperatures in India, said Hero Electric CEO Sohinder Gill. "There would certainly be delays in new electric vehicle product launches but this would only ensure safer products being rolled out to customers. India needs new certification standards that take care of battery chemistry and design," said Gill, also director general of the Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV).

"Testing agencies need to do accelerated degradation testing on how batteries degrade in two-three years," said Venkat Rajaraman, CEO of lithium ion battery pack maker Cygni Energy. Lithium Highly Inflammable Experts said lithium, which is predominantly used in EV batteries, is highly inflammable. "The battery management system needs to be recalibrated to take control of the quality of the batteries. The issues on hand are extremely critical and the whole industry should come together to find the right way ahead, so that customer safety is never compromised," said a top executive at an electric scooter company. The Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) and the International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT), both government testing laboratories, didn't respond to queries.

EV explosion

After four incidents of electric two-wheelers were recorded in one week, the Centre for Fire, Explosive and Environment Safety, part of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, are investigating the cases and will take appropriate action against manufacturers, road transport and highways minister Nitin Gadkari said recently.

Batteries could be overstrained because of faster charging times and greater density as well as the drive to keep weight down, said manufacturers of the cells. Technically, the powertrain in EVs is robust and simple, but the battery needs special attention, they said, adding that the problem arises when battery manufacture and operation are not well regulated. Original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) should watch out for this. "Almost all lithium ion cells are imported, hence testing of each and every cell during assembly has to be ascertained," Amitabh Kantsaid. "The battery management system needs to be strengthened and industry (battery and vehicle OEMs) should come together to define the minimum parameters and self-declare the adherence."

> **Testing agencies need to conduct accelerated degradation testing on how electric vehicle batteries degrade in two to three years**
> -- Venkat Rajaraman, CEO, Cygni Energy

To minimise fire risk and keep consumer confidence intact, EV makers should recall models involved in such incidents till they sort out battery-related issues, said experts. "OEMs (auto and battery) dealing with such issues generally recall the vehicles pertaining to the batch affected with such issues to ensure that any issue is fixed timely without loss of life and property," said Kant.

—Lijee Philip (Economic Times)

India powered by 1,742 public stations

The number of electric vehicles on roads in India has reached over ten lakh with around 1,700 charging stations operational in public places across the country, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari informed Lok Sabha recently. As per Vahan 4 data, as of March 25 this year, a total of 10,76,420 EVs and a total of 1,742 Public Charging Stations (PCS), as per the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), are operational.

The Ministry of Power has issued "Charging Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles - the revised consolidated Guidelines and Standards" on January 14, 2022, to accelerate the e-mobility transition in the country, Gadkari said.

"Action plans have been prepared by the BEE for 8 cities with a 4 million-plus population (Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Surat, and Pune)," Gadkari told Lok Sabha.

Under these action plans, scenario-wise targets have been prepared for Business as Usual (BAU), Moderate and Aggressive Scenarios for the installation of chargers in these cities.

The Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) had invited proposals from any government organisation or Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) to build and operate public EV charging infrastructure on expressways and National Highways under FAME India Scheme Phase-II for Highways and Expressways.

On the other hand, PSU Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), in consortium with Convergence Energy Services Limited (a subsidiary of EESL), has been awarded the work for setting up EV charging stations along 16 NH or expressways. In order to facilitate EESL in the above prospect, NHAI has signed an MOU with EESL, the ministry said. **—ANI**

'20% rise in cell cost due to hike in raw material prices'

Tata Motors, India's top-selling electric carmaker, said the cost of battery cells had increased by around 20% because of a global surge in raw material prices, mainly lithium, putting pressure on the company in the short-term.

Shailesh Chandra, managing director of the passenger vehicles and electric mobility subsidiaries, told Reuters that cell prices have been rising over months and he expects them to remain high for about a year. "Immediate impact seems to be about a 20% kind of an increase which will have short-term pressure. This should moderate within a year and then start coming down," he said.

Chandra did not comment on whether this would affect the company's sales or profitability but said that demand for "green personal mobility" was rising sharply and he expected to offset some of the costs by increasing the use of locally sourced components in its cars.

Automakers globally are facing inflationary pressures due to surging costs of nickel, cobalt and lithium that are used in making batteries - the most expensive part of an electric vehicle (EV) - as

demand outstrips supply.

This has been made worse by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and analysts say it threatens to slow the trend of falling battery prices which could hamper the broader adoption of EVs, especially in price-sensitive markets like India.

In India's nascent EV market, electric cars make up only 1% of total car sales. High battery prices and an insufficient charging network are the main reasons why there are few takers, and why more carmakers are yet to launch electric models.

Spot prices for lithium carbonate, which is typically used to make lithium-ion batteries, surged to over $70,000 per tonne in March 2022 from about $10,000 a year earlier, according to data from industry forecaster Benchmark Market Intelligence.

"Going forward this inflationary impact is expected to continue," said Manish Dua, senior analyst at Benchmark.

Tata recently raised the price of its Nexon electric SUV in India by over $300 - a 2% rise for the base model, following similar moves globally by Tesla Inc and China's BYD .

Even so, Tata, which has over 90% share of India's electric car market, expects sales of its electric cars to grow over four-fold this fiscal year from 4,200 units last year.

—Reuters

No impact on safety of Covaxin: Bharat Biotech

After WHO suspension, company says production being slowed down for facility optimisation

#Hyderabad

Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech on Sunday issued a clarification that there is "no impact on efficacy and safety of the covid-19 vaccine COVAXIN" after the World Health Organisation suspended it from its Covax facility. "For the millions who have received COVAXIN, the vaccine certificates issued still stand valid as there is no impact on efficacy and safety of the vaccine," read the statement issued by Bharat Biotech on suspension from WHO. The vaccine manufacturer further said the company is slowing down production of Covaxin for facility optimisation.

"For the coming period the company will focus on pending facility maintenance, process and facility optimization activities," the statement read. "As all existing facilities were repurposed for the manufacture of COVAXIN, with continuous production during the past year, to meet the public health emergency of covid, these upgrades were due. Certain highly sophisticated equipment which was required to enhance the process stringency was unavailable during the covid pandemic. It has to be stressed that the quality of COVAXIN was never compromised at any point in time," it added.

A file photo of a nurse holding vials of the Covid-19 Vaccine Covaxin at a hospital in Harare, Zimbabwe

The company also mentioned that they are working to further improvements and upgrades.

"Notwithstanding this excellent safety and efficacy record, Bharat Biotech is diligently working to further improvements and upgrades to ensure that the production of COVAXIN continues to meet ever-increasing global regulatory requirements. Since patient safety is the primary consideration for any new vaccine, there can be no compromises in meeting operational excellence objectives," it said.

COVAXIN has been suspended by World Health Organization (WHO) , announced the UN health body on Saturday attributing it to deficiencies in manufacturing practices. "WHO confirms the suspension of supply of COVAXIN through UN procurement agencies and recommending to countries that received the vaccine to take actions as appropriate," the WHO stated.

However, the UN body clarified that there will be no issues related to the safety and efficacy of a vaccine.

"The risk assessment to date does not indicate a change in the risk-benefit ratio. The data available to WHO, indicate the vaccine is effective and no safety concern exists. For continuation of vaccination with alternative sources of covid vaccines countries should refer to the SAGE recommendation," it read. — ANI

Cop caught on camera slapping kid suspended

#Vadodara

A policeman was suspended after a CCTV camera caught him slapping a 13-year-old child several times in a marketplace in Vadodara city in Gujarat, an official said on Sunday. The incident took place at Nandesari market at around 8:45pm on Saturday and the personnel has been identified as Shaktisinh Pvra attached to Chhani police station, a control room official said.

"Pavra had gone to another police station in the city in his official vehicle and was returning when he noticed the child muttering something at him.He got down, slapped the child several times and also twisted his arm, all of which got captured by a CCTV camera in the vicinity," the official said. — PTI

Hyderabad rave party: Actor, daughter of IPS officer in dock

#Hyderabad

Hyderabad Task Force Police busted a rave party at a pub in Radisson Hotel in the wee hours on Sunday and found 150 people partying and a few consuming drugs. The Station House Officer (SHO) Banjara Hills has been suspended for negligence of duty. As per a senior police official, "The powder seized was claimed as sugar by the hotel staff but it tested positive for Cocaine. All 150 people, including over 30 women, were taken into custody and shifted to Banjara Hills police station."

The Hyderabad Task Force Police busted the party going on at at pub in an upscale hotel in the city

A Tollywood actor, a singer and a daughter of a senior IPS officer were also found partying in the pub, as per sources. Commissioner of Police Hyderabad, CV Anand, on Sunday, issued orders placing under suspension, the SHO Banjara Hills, Shiva Chandra, and issued a charge memo to the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Banjara Hills, M Sudarshan for negligence towards their legitimate duties in the control of narcotics in pubs and bars. — ANI

White-topping or white mischief?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Technical specifications cannot be different in different parts of Bengaluru," said a Malleswaram resident. Netizens said they tried to reach out to various sources to get a copy of the technical specifications the BBMP is supposed to follow during white-topping of roads, but did not succeed.

"I wanted to get a copy of the technical specifications the BBMP contractors are following. The last resort to get the document is through RTI. This process takes at least one month. By that time, the work will be over. I tried talking to engineers on the ground. They said the bars are not needed since they are using high-grade cement," said another resident.

Meanwhile, the white-topping work of Sampige Road is progressing at lightning speed. The work began on March 15. Almost 75% of the stretch has already been concretised.

"The workers have covered a lot of area. The work goes on till 1:00 am on some days. The issue of the missing steel bars was brought up during a recent ward committee meeting, but BBMP officials did not pay heed," said another resident.

What are tie bars?

The missing steel bars that the residents are referring to are called tie bars by civil engineers. Tie bars are deformed steel bars commonly called 'connectors' that are used to hold rigid concrete slabs together. They substantially improve the performance of pavement joints by keeping the slabs interlocked and prevent traverse cracking. While the initial cost is high, tie bars reduce the life cycle cost.

As per guidelines on conventional and thin white-topping issued by Indian Roads Congress, the tie bar is a standard specification and part of the design. "Tie bars maintain structural integrity of concrete slabs. The slabs are subjected to different kinds of conditions such as temperature variations and vehicle load profile. Temperature variations cause some level of contraction and expansion. The load profile of vehicles also requires tie bars. These need to be embedded in concrete blocks so that the whole road acts as a single unit. The guidelines of the Indian Roads Congress should be followed," said Dr Ashish Verma of the Sustainable Transportation Lab at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

When BM reached out to BBMP, the civic body denied any discrepancy. However, when a picture of the ongoing white-topping work was shared, an official said tie bars will be inserted after drilling holes in the slabs. "We are using M40 grade concrete, for which we do not use steel reinforcement. The work is being done the same way everywhere in the city. Tie bars are a small issue. We will drill holes in the slabs and put the tie bars," the official said. "As per Indian Roads Congress guidelines, tie bars are supposed to be put while concreting the slabs to ensure grip. It is done to increase structural strength. It is no showpiece to be drilled in later," added Dr Verma.

Business hit

"We are not getting any business. They started digging the road almost two months ago to repair stormwater drains. They dug up the sides; that isolated the buildings from the road. While the stormwater drain work was still on, white-topping started. Even if they finish the main road, they will have to fill in the space on the sides. Moreover, there are sections left untouched for the crossroads to connect," said a shop owner along the stretch. According to residents, the stretch was in a good condition before the white-topping work started — they said the white-topping has rendered Sampige Road non-functional and made residents' lives miserable.

The stretch from Malleswaram Circle towards 18th Cross is a mess now. While one-half of the stretch has already been concretised, the work on the second half is in the process. Although the work is moving fast, there is still a lot to be done.

WORLD

'Khan to stay in power for next 15 days'

#Islamabad

Imran Khan will remain in power for another 15 days, former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed said on Sunday, hours after the former cricketer-turned-politician, in a controversial move, got the National Assembly dissolved.

In a statement, the former security czar of the country said that he met Khan, head of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, after he recommended dissolution of the lower house of Parliament and called for snap elections.

Rasheed said that the next general elections in the country would not be held via electronic voting machines. He said that the Opposition should be happy that the electronic voting machines are not being used in the next general elections. — PTI

6 killed, 10 hurt in California mass shooting

#Sacramento

Six people were killed and 10 injured in a mass shooting early Sunday as bars and nightclubs were closing in downtown Sacramento and police in California's state capital were searching for at least one suspect. Sacramento Police Chief Kathy Lester said at a news conference that police were patrolling the area at about 2 a.m. when they heard gunfire. When they arrived at the scene, they found a large crowd gathered on the street and six people dead. Another 10 either took themselves or were transported to hospitals. No information was given on their conditions.

Authorities don't know whether one or more suspects were involved and are asking for the public's help in identifying who is responsible. Lester did not give specifics on the type of gun used. This is "a very complex and complicated scene", she said. Lester issued a plea to the public, asking for witnesses or anyone with recordings of the incident to contact police. — AP

HEALTH TIP: Eat peas regularly to promote normal bowel movements. The high fibre content in peas also helps to deal with constipation.

Cumin water is rich in calcium, potassium, manganese and selenium which aid in the rejuvenation of skin

Sign language

Compatible partners make great relationships; check if stars are aligned to find best matches

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Whether you believe in the dramatic idiom that states that matches are made in heaven or otherwise, we're sure you're at least curious about finding out who you are compatible with, zodiac-wise. Are your stars aligned or crossed when it comes to love and relationship? How much should you rely on zodiac compatibility when you're on the hunt for a life partner? These are questions that must have popped up in your mind.

Zodiac compatibility

Before we delve into which zodiac signs are compatible with each other, it is important to identify these zodiac signs into their "elements". The 12 zodiac signs are divided into four elements — Air, water, fire and earth — that control their compatibility.

- Air signs: Gemini, Libra, Aquarius
- Earth signs: Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn
- Water signs: Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces
- Fire signs: Aries, Leo, Sagittarius

As a ground rule, star signs with the same element are always a good match. However, there are exceptions and intermingling of certain elements is allowed.

Virgo compatibility

Born between August 23 and September 22, they match best with Taurus and Capricorn.

They're also compatible with Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces.

Practical and goal-oriented, Virgos like putting a lot of effort into their relationships and want to make their relationships last. They want people who can share their goals with them.

Taurus compatibility

Born between April 20 and May 20 they match best with Virgo and Capricorn.

They also gel well with Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces.

Taurus are very set in their ways, some might even say they are stubborn and are aware of who they are and what they want. When they find true love, Taurus are supportive of them, no matter what.

Pisces compatibility

Born between February 19 and March 20 they match well with Cancer and Scorpio and can do well with Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn too.

Pisces people are artistic, creative and fluid like the element that rules them. Scorpio and Cancer are passionate and have the ability to live in the abstract ways that Pisces prefers. Although Capricorn is fundamentally opposite of Pisces, together, they make a good couple.

Leo compatibility

Leos are born between July 23 and August 22 and Aries and Sagittarius are their best matches. They're also compatible with Gemini, Libra and Aquarius.

A Leo man and woman are always looking for best friends who share their enthusiasm for life in their relationship as much as they want a lover. For them, compatibility means finding someone who is their match personality-wise.

Capricorn compatibility

Those born between December 22 and January 19 match best with Taurus and Virgo. They are also compatible with Gemini, Libra and Aquarius.

Capricorn is ambitious and revels in their accomplishments. They are perfectionists and are always on the lookout for partners who will be supportive of them in achieving their dreams. Virgo shares this drive for perfection making them the right partners for Capricorn.

Aquarius compatibility

Born between January 20 and February 18 they match best with Gemini and Libra but also do well with Aries, Leo and Sagittarius.

Aquarius are self-critical and chansing improvements. They are mavericks, too, who are extremely intelligent. When searching for a partner, Aquarius are always on the hunt for someone who can stimulate them mentally. A Gemini is the best for Aquarius since they both enjoy cerebral discussions.

Sagittarius compatibility

Those born between November 22 and December 21 bond best with Aries and Leo but do fairly well with Gemini, Libra and Aquarius.

Sagittarius are people who love to explore and learn new things through experiences. They want someone who can join them on this journey of self-discovery making a Gemini or another Sagittarius their perfect match.

Scorpio compatibility

Cancer and Pisces are the best matches for those born between October 23 and November 21. Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn also make great partners.

Scorpios are extremely private about their innermost thoughts and they want a partner who can understand them for who they are and not what they look like on a surface level. They find it challenging to open up to those who don't meet their emotional needs.

Libra compatibility

Gemini and Aquarius make great partners for those born between September 23 and October 22. Aries, Leo and Sagittarius do well too.

A Libra embodies their Zodiac symbol of balance. They like to have a little bit of everything without things becoming overbearing. They are also highly intellectual, so mental stimulation is something they are looking forward to in all their relationships.

Cancer compatibility

Born between June 21 and July 22, they pair best with Scorpio and Pisces. Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn are other great pairings for them.

The element of romance is strong in Cancer and they want someone who will understand them intuitively. They care about developing strong emotional connections and someone who makes them feel at home. Security in their relationship is what every cancer is seeking.

Aries compatibility

Born between March 21 and April 19, they match best with Leo and Sagittarius. Gemini, Libra and Aquarius are other good options.

Aries are dominant. They like taking charge, are natural problem-solvers and are fiercely independent. When it comes to relationships, they want someone who will respect their space and care about thriving together and individually. An ideal Aries partner is one who knows to handle them and can participate in their lives, too.

Gemini compatibility

Geminas, born between May 21 and June 20, bond the best with Libra and Aquarius.

They are also compatible with Aries, Leo and Sagittarius.

As depicted by their zodiac symbol, Gemini are quick to jump from one end of the spectrum to the other and need someone who is as agile as them. They can get easily bored so someone who shares their passion for adventure and knows how to have a good time is the best match. Aries, Sagittarius and Aquarius can keep Gemini feeling curious.

All problems solved

Dear Coleen

I'm in my 30s and a couple of months ago, I started dating a woman who's a bit younger (27) and it's going well. However, the closer we get, the more I want to back off because it feels very uncomfortable and I can sense she thinks I'm being weird.
I've been cheated on by almost every woman I've dated, including my last girlfriend.
It was a serious relationship and my ex ripped my heart apart by having an affair with someone I know.
I hate feeling vulnerable, but equally I don't want to push this woman away, as I think we're really good together.

COLEEN SAYS
You're judging her by your previous girlfriends and I get it – it's hard not to be affected by what's happened to you in the past. But listen up, I've been cheated on left, right and centre, and I've also had two marriages that didn't work out. But I never closed myself off to the possibility of a new relationship.
Yep, I cried and was heartbroken every time I was let down, but I came out the other side. I survived it and you can find strength in that.
Things are progressing with your girlfriend and your feelings are becoming deeper, so this defence mechanism is kicking in.
But don't see vulnerability as a negative thing – it's OK to admit your fears and honesty is one of the most important things for any relationship. What's bad for the relationship is closing down and becoming paranoid and insecure.
Don't let the fear of being hurt control your life.
—Coleen Nolan, Daily Mirror

Chai-Time

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

A's age is 5 times B 's age. In 3 years A's age will be 2 times B's age. How old will B be when A is 100 years old?

BangaloreMirror | 10
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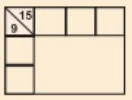
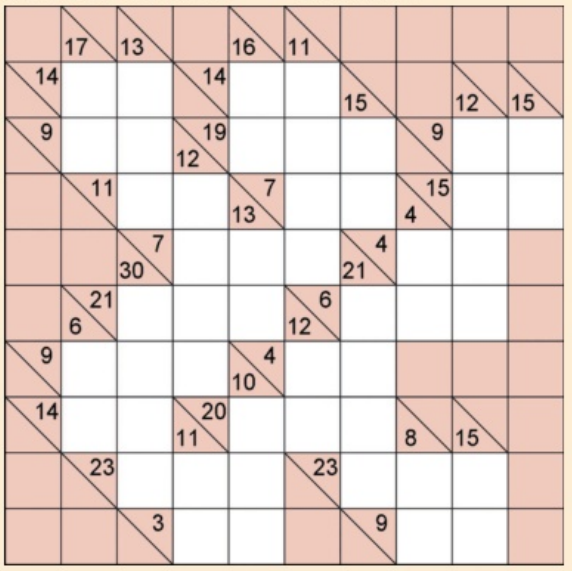
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



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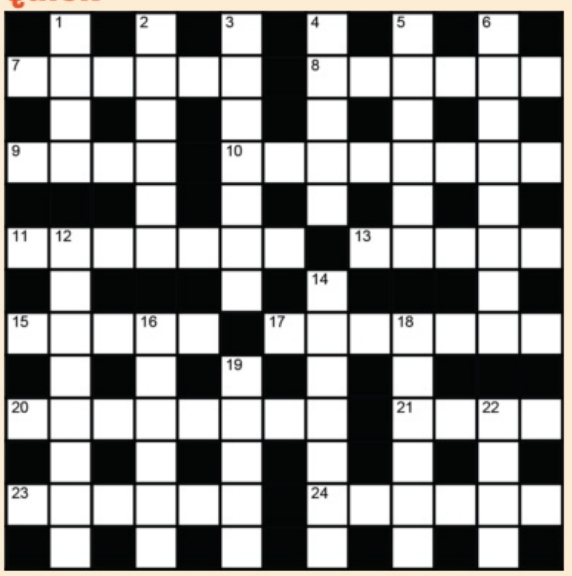


ACROSS

7 Important city in Pakistan (6)
8 Sesame Street frog (6)
9 Child's bed (4)
10 Jet, Indigo, Go Air, etc (8)
11 Surprised by Joy author (1,1,5)
13 Refute (5)
15 Northernmost district of Karnataka (5)
17 Manned (7)
20 Consultative (8)
21 Priestly robes (4)
23 Funeral vehicle (6)
24 An ___ task : a difficult job? (6)

DOWN

1 Beastly dwelling? (4)
2 Eat hurriedly and noisily (6)
3 Hair pigment (7)
4 Woman's garment (5)
5 Reach a point (6)
6 Soft job (8)
12 Beauty is but ___ ___? (4,4)
14 Stick around, don't move (4,3)
16 Bee farm (6)
18 Showy or ostentatious (6)
19 Ciphers (5)
22 Indonesian island (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: F EQUALS T

L KWCLFRIC YLV RO YZFRILFCN HB FGC NCORWC FZ LKGRCIC, VZF HB FGC NCORWC FZ HCLF ZFGCWO.

Linemaro

(Looking into her eyes with a huge smile): OK, I can die happy now!

Mindchow

A birthday is just the first day of another 365-day journey around the sun. Enjoy the trip

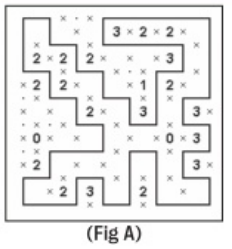
Joke of the day

I got home, and the phone was ringing. I picked it up, and said 'Who's speaking please?' And a voice said 'You are'

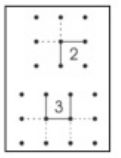
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

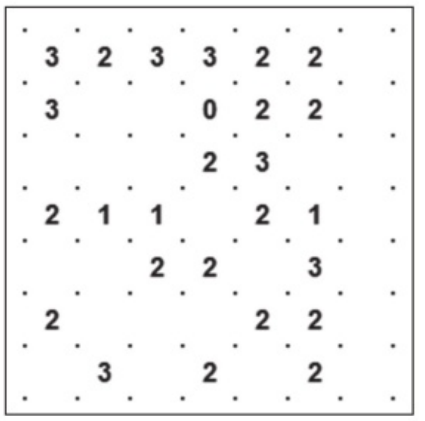


(Fig B) Not Allowed

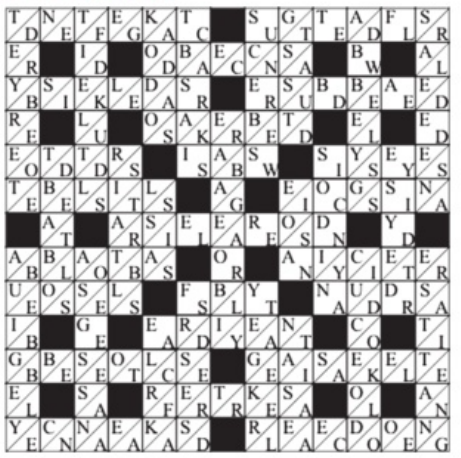
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				Y
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

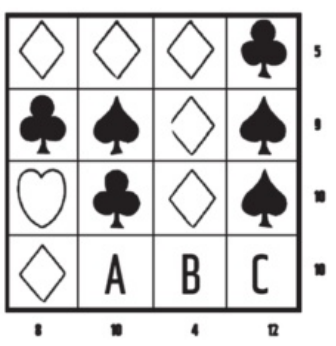
1 Carve; 6 Apery;
7 Tuile; 8 Mires;
9 Baths

DOWN

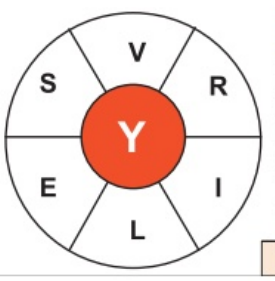
1 Mr Cub; 2 Irate;
3 Aphis; 4 At lev;
5 Y seer

Mensapuzzle

What are A, B and C?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; **05** Good; **07** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

		7	1		2	3		
9				5				7
5		3				1		8
			3	8	9			
	1			6			4	
			4	1	5			
7		4				8		2
8				9				1
		6	7		8	9		

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

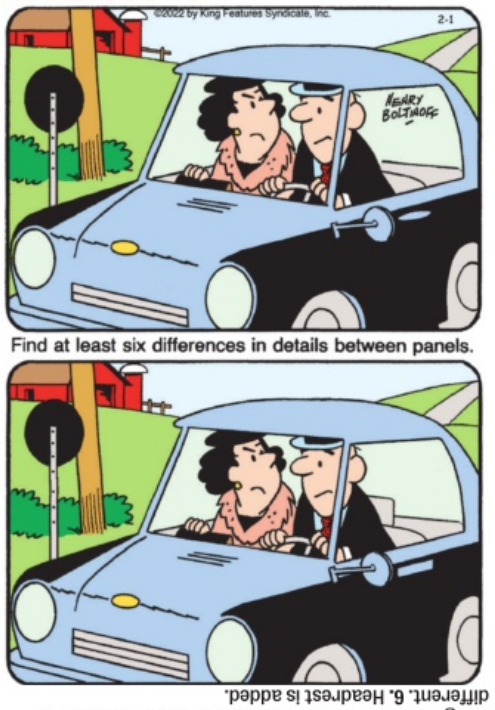
Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 5
6 7 9 9

Medium = 19
1 4 7 8

Hard = 13
1 4 8 2

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

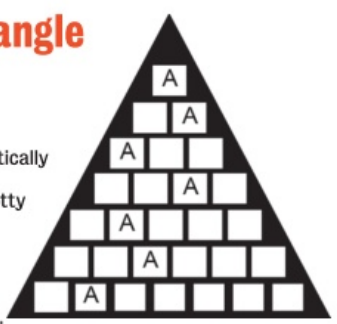
Differences: 1. Slide mirror is moved. 2. Grille is different. 3. Sign is taller. 4. Door handle is different. 5. Fence is different. 6. Headrest is added.

Riddler

What phrase is shown in the figure below?
S-n-o-w

Alpha triangle

1 First letter
2 Bye!
3 Illustrative craft
4 Play the lead role
5 Declaims bombastically
6 Readies
7 Make dirty or spotty



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

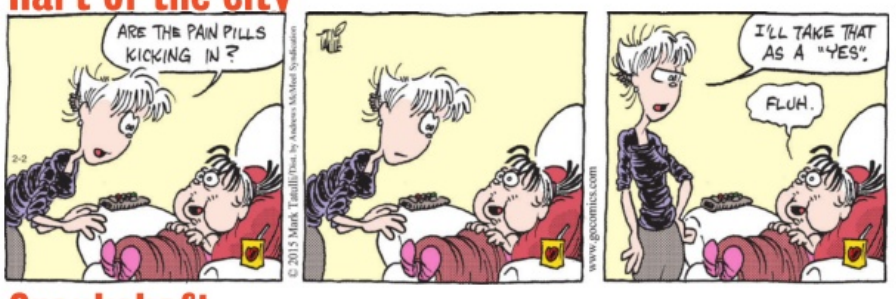
COMICS

Redeye by Mel Casson

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city


ARE THE PAIN PILLS KICKING IN?
I'LL TAKE THAT AS A "YES".
FLUH.
2-2
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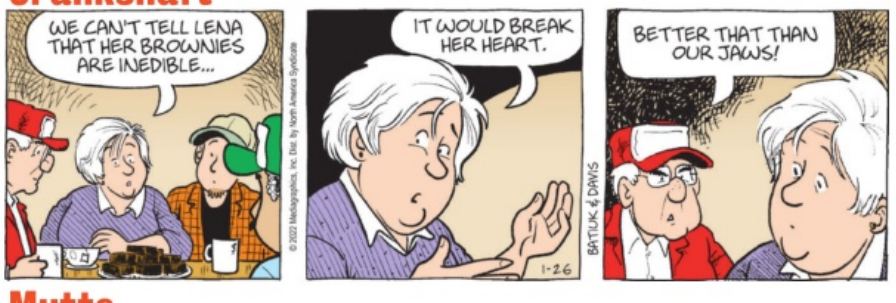
Crankshaft



Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you are in a good mood. This may make you romantic. Exercise to overcome your back pain. You may make some fruitful plans, which may be helpful in the near future for your profession. You may hear good news from your kids. Students may do better. Love birds may make some important decisions in terms of marriage.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
You are likely to meet old friends or be busy in a social gathering. You may be more excited today. You may come across unexpected material gains. Kids may give good news in terms of studies. Love birds may enjoy quality moments.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Control expenditure on worthless stuff, or it may affect savings. Avoid lending money. Anxiety may cause sleeplessness, so control your mind while making important decisions. Don't run from your responsibilities. Be practical. Avoid making emotional decisions.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
You may expect smart gains from past investments. You may achieve your goals with low effort. This may make you confident. Control straightforward urges or it may affect your terms with the people around you.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Past investments may yield profits and boost savings. You may gain good profits from small investments. On the domestic front, your family may support you to maintain harmony. You may also be in a winning position as far as opponents and enemies are concerned. You may get promoted or change your job.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
You may expect instant gains in business, which may boost your confidence level as well as bank balance. Avoid stress in domestic life. There will be some momentum on the business and work front. Your prestige may increase. You may plan an overseas trip.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Students may expect positive results in studies. Singles may find a match. There may be good understanding with your spouse, which will reflect in your domestic life. Spiritually, you may have some direction in terms of knowledge. In business, you may make some new plans to overcome workflow issues.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Things will not be favourable. You may feel dull and unhappy. Mysterious fear may make you upset. You may be attracted by occult. You may feel a lack of confidence, which may affect your work. Avoid rash driving and risky adventurous tours.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, you may be able to maintain a balance between your earnings and expenses. You may perform better at your job. Your boss may give you new responsibilities in terms of promotions. You may get your money back. You may be able to control opponents and hidden enemies.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
You may sense negative vibes and feel unhappy. Avoid investments in worthless assets. You may notice that friends and people around you may not be supportive today. Do not expect more from anyone in terms of help, otherwise it may make you nervous. It is advised to make decisions independently today.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, you may not be able to present yourself logically. You may have a dull feeling, which may give you a lack of confidence. Follow your intuition while making decisions in terms of investments. People around you may not be cooperative in terms of routine work. Be careful while eating unhealthy food to avoid stomach issues.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
You are likely to be more excited due to the cooperation of your family and friends. You may plan to renovate your house or may bring some stuff to maintain your standard of living. This may boost your social status. You may expect an increase in your fixed assets.

KIDZONE

G Varsha, 8 Years, Vibgyor High School

Tejas, 10 Years, Bangalore International Academy

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No.4, KSCCF Compound, Pampa Maha Kavi Road, Chamrajpet, Bengaluru 560 018; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
Today A=5B
In three years A+3=2(B+3)
5B+3=2B+6
3B=3
B=1 and A=5 today
A will always be 4 years old.
When A is 100, B=96

RIDDLER
Dashing through the snow

BULL'S EYE
livery, lyre, rely, SILVERY, slyer, verily, very

FAST FIVE

C	R	A	V	E
R	E	P	A	Y
U	T	I	L	E
M	I	S	E	R
B	A	H	T	S

STRIKE OUT

D	E	F	E	A	T		S	T	E	A	L	S		
Y	I	E	L	D	S		R	U	B	B	E	D		
R	L		S	K	E	E	T		E		D			
O	D	D	S		S	A	W		I	S	E	E		
T	E	S	T	S		G		E	O	S	I	N		
	A		A	I	L	E	R	O	N		D			
C	R	A	V	E		N	I	C	E	R				
U	S	E	S		F	L	Y		A	U	R	A		
B	L	A	B	S		R	N		I	C	E	R		
B	G		A	R	Y	A	N		C		T			
B	E	T	T	L	E		G	A	S	K	E	T		
L	A		F	E	T	E	S		O		A			
L	E	N	N	E	A	D		R	A	C	O	O	N	

QUICK

L	G		M		S		A		S					
L	A	H	O	R	E		K	E	R	M	I	T		
E		A		D		A		C		A		B		
H	E	A	R	S	E		U	P	H	I	L	L		
	E		A		D			P		S		A		
A	D	V	I	S	O	R	Y		A	B	B	A		
	N		P		C		A		L					
B	I	D	A	R		S	T	A	F	F	E	D		
	K			N		S				R				
C	S	L	E	W	I	S		R	E	B	U	T		
	L		N		T		V		C					
C	R	I	B		A	I	R	L	I	N	E	S		
	I		B		L		I		R		N			
L	A	H	O	R	E		K	E	R	M	I	T		
I		D		A		C		A		B		A		
Y	I	E	L	D	S		R	U	B	B	E	D		

MENSA PUZZLE
A is a heart, B is a diamond, C is a heart. By simple elimination the following emerges: a diamond is 1 (see third vertical column) a club is 2 a spade is 3 a heart is 4

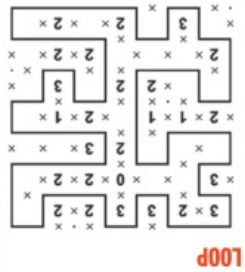
QUOTE UNCODE
A creative man is motivated by the desire to achieve, not by the desire to beat others.

SUDOKU

6	8	7	1	4	2	3	9	5
9	2	1	8	5	3	4	6	7
5	4	3	9	7	6	1	2	8
4	7	5	3	8	9	2	1	6
3	1	8	2	6	7	5	4	9
2	6	9	4	1	5	7	8	3
7	9	4	6	3	1	8	5	2
8	3	2	5	9	4	6	7	1
1	5	6	7	2	8	9	3	4

ALPHA TRIANGLE
A, Ta, Art, Star, Rants, Trains, Tarnish.

LOOP



GO FIGURE
Easy
9 – 6 – 7 + 9 = 5
Medium
7 + 8 x 1 + 4 = 19
Hard
8 + 4 + 2 – 1 = 13

KAKURO

Volume No 15, Issue No 204 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/21142 Published for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by R.J. Prakashan at No.4, KSCCF Compound, Pampa Maha Kavi Road, Chamrajpet, Bengaluru 560 018 and printed by him at Fourth Estate Ltd, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, Bommasandra Industrial Area, Hosur Road, Bengaluru 560099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No.4, KSCCF Compound, Pampa Maha Kavi Road, Chamarajpet, Bengaluru 560 018. Email : mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon – responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

Covid halts Daniel Craig's return to Broadway

Daniel Craig's return to Broadway in a version of 'Macbeth' has been temporarily halted after the actor contracted covid-19. Wednesday's performances were canceled after the Bond actor tested positive

BangaloreMirror | 12
Monday, April 4, 2022
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Entertainment Industry Promotion

INTERVIEW VIDYA BALAN, ACTOR

Happy where she is

Vidya Balan on how she deals with success and failure, her relationship and more

Vidya Balan has had the quintessential drama, euphoria and adversity in her long and illustrious career. Through thick and thin, Vidya has remained resilient and graceful. In an interview with Rachit Gupta of ETimes, she looks back at her choices and reflects on her growth as an actor, wife and as a person. Excerpts:

How do you react when people praise your performance, but do not like the film?

I'm grateful that I'm still receiving love for my work. It is not just the icing on the cake, it becomes the whole cake when the film is appreciated. Like it happened with Kahaani. Everyone loved everything about it. I have to say that love in any form is welcome, and I'm always grateful for that love.

Are you happy with the kind of roles and stories that are offered to you?

I think I have been content for the past 14 years. Ever since Ishqiya happened, things have only been getting better with the kind of stories and scripts that are written for me. If you generally see the women led films, there's so much variety. Also, in the industry, whether it's theatrical or OTT, the content is so diverse.

Looking back at your journey, do you feel your process as an actor has changed?

I don't think it's changed, but I feel I tune in more to what I really want to do. I've become more instinctive, in terms of the process of decision making, but in terms of the process of filmmaking that the film dictates.

Does the fact that you're a star weigh in on your decision-making, while choosing a film?

It feels wonderful to know that people have expectations from me, but I don't allow that to become a pressure. The decisions have to be solely mine, they're not influenced by anything else. For me to commit entirely to something, I have to believe in it.

Have you ever faced a situation in the past where your judgment went totally wrong?

Absolutely. Whenever I've not paid heed to my instinct, I've faltered. I'm not saying that equals failure, because I feel you always learn something and you grow which is why facing failure is also very, very important. But I think, over time, I've begun to pay more heed to my inner voice.

Through these ups and downs, where does your better half Siddharth Roy Kapur fit in?

Siddharth is the most patient listener I've come across. He doesn't give advice; he never tells me to do this or do that. He just hears me out. And through that process, I end up developing clarity. I feel blessed to have him as my partner. He accepts me the way I am, on my good days and bad days. We've been married for close to 10 years and that's what I think I've come to realise that I now appreciate marriage because of him.

You are able to keep your marriage private.

Because we're both private people. The fact that I'm an actor doesn't change that. I don't feel compelled to put up pictures of us. I don't put up even my snaps unless it's work related.

What is an average day in your life like?

I wake up at eight thirty. I do yoga or walk, depending on the day of the week. Then I have breakfast and then I chill. I speak to my family and then I do my prayers. It's pretty much organised till here. Then I go meet my parents or my niece and nephew. I sit and watch something at home or read something. Evenings are spent with Siddharth, if he's free (laughs). I also do a lot of cleaning around the house. I find it therapeutic.

To read the entire interview, point your phone camera at the QR code

Are you relieved now that people have stopped commenting about your weight, fashion choices and guessing your motherhood plans?

I think it stopped affecting me and so people stopped commenting. I wouldn't have an internal reaction let alone an external one. People may have realised that. You know how people pick on energy, may be they realised it's pointless. I'm happy with myself. So if you have a problem, it's your problem.

Vikrant Rona teaser leaves Sudeep fans agog

Fans of Kannada superstar Kichcha Sudeep have given a big thumbs up to his pan-India fantasy thriller 'Vikrant Rona'.

Netizens and reviewers are appreciating and enjoying Kichcha Sudeepa's 3D fantasy which promises to take them for a visual treat.

Kichcha Sudeepa's most anticipated film 'Vikrant Rona' is among the most ambitious and mega project from the Kannada film industry. It has been creating a ripple and was making huge waves and buzz even before the release of its trailer.

The teaser was not only appreciated in Karnataka, but the fantasy voyage tale has caught the attention of audiences from the entire country.

Big stars like Salman Khan, Chiranjeevi, Mohanlal and Simbu announced the release date teaser of the 3D fantasy 'Vikrant Rona'.

The people are hailing the filmmaker's marvellous vision with use of VFX, BGM, and action sequences to perfection.

The teaser has also got praise from superstars including Rakshit Shetty, Mohanlal, and Chiranjeevi. Many have jumped into the conversation praising the visionary teaser and also talk of Kichcha Sudeep's remarkable performance in it.

IANS

Malaika back home from hospital

Malaika Arora, who sustained minor injuries after her car met with an accident, yesterday early evening, has been discharged from the hospital. Arjun Kapoor brought her back home and she is now recovering.

"She's fine and recovering at home now," Malaika's sister Amrita Arora confirmed to ETimes.

The actress has sustained no major injury and was admitted to the hospital only for observation. "Actor Malaika has minor injuries on her forehead; CT scan has turned out fine & she is currently okay. The actor will be kept under observation for the night & will be discharged in the morning tomorrow," the statement from the hospital read.

The accident happened on Saturday night on the expressway at Khopoli, Maharashtra. Malaika was returning home after attending Pune Times Fashion week. The accident reportedly took place around 4.45 pm near a food-mall, a bus and two cars collided and one of them hit Malaika's SUV. Police said they are investigating into how the accident happened.

—ETimes

After-effects of a slap

Actor Will Smith's film 'Fast and Loose' has been put on hold by Netflix after he slapped co-median Chris Rock at Oscars 2022 a few days ago.

Weeks before the Oscars ceremony, director David Leitch reportedly also pulled away from the project, electing to move to the Ryan Gosling vehicle 'Fall Guy' for Universal, and now the streaming giant has decided to pull away from the film, Variety reported. For the unversed, the conflict arose after Rock, who was presenting the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature, seized the moment to crack a few jokes, including one about Smith's wife Jada Pinkett Smith's shaved head.

He compared the 50-year-old actor's appearance to that of Demi Moore's look in 'G.I. Jane'. Jada, who recently opened up about living with alopecia areata, was visibly upset, rolling her eyes. Seconds later, Smith walked onstage and approached Rock, smacking him.